



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ARIVACA MAN SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS FOR TRAFFICKING 3,913 POUNDS OF MARIJUANA WHILE ARMED WITH A SAWED- OFF SHOTGUN

TUCSON – Eddie Lee Hodges, 40, of Arivaca, Ariz. was sentenced Monday to 240 months in prison, by U.S. District Judge Cindy K. Jorgenson. Eddie Lee Hodges had pleaded guilty on August 9, 2006, to Possessing with the Intent to Distribute 3,913 pounds of marijuana and Possession of a sawed-off shotgun to protect the marijuana while it was being distributed.

On February 6, 2006, Immigration Customs Enforcement Special Agents assisted by United States Border Patrol Agents received information that a large amount of marijuana was being stored in a trailer off of Ruby Road in Arivaca, Arizona. Agents approached the trailer and saw a suspect flee on foot. The suspect was apprehended and identified as Eddie Lee Hodges. A strong smell of marijuana was detected emanating around the trailer and carport. Some 177 bundles of marijuana were seized weighing approximately 3,913 pounds. A loaded Marlin 10 gauge bolt action sawed-off shotgun was discovered with the marijuana. Eddie Lee Hodges told agents that the sawed-off shotgun was his and that he was guarding the marijuana until arrangements could be made to transport the marijuana to Tucson. Eddie Lee Hodges was a key member of a Drug Trafficking Organization operating in Southern Arizona.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Arizona Border Enforcement Security Task Force led by Immigration Customs Enforcement in partnership with and assisted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, and the United States Border Patrol. The prosecution is being handled by David P. Petermann, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

The Arizona Border Enforcement and Security Task Force (B.E.S.T.) focuses its efforts on enforcing the interdiction and prosecution of cross-border organizations responsible for the smuggling of drugs, persons, money, and weapons into and from the United States.

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